

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-17

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: SNAR, UY

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL NARCOTICS REPORT ISSUED

1. CONGRESSMAN MURPHY AND STEELE ISSUED MARCH 21 REPORT OF STUDY MISSION TO LATIN AMERICA AND GERMANY ON NARCOTICS MATTERS. SUMMARY OF PERTINENT PART CONCERNING URUGUAY FOLLOWS.

2. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT URUGUAY HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BECOME A CONDUIT FOR NARCOTICS MOVING TO THE UNITED STATES. SMUGGLING HAS BEEN COMMON IN THAT COUNTRY FOR YEARS AND THE CHANNELS ARE WELL ESTABLISHED AND WELL USED. THE GOVERNMENT OF URUGUAY HAS PLEDGED ITS COOPERATION IN THE EFFORT TO DEAL WITH THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM.

3. RECENTLY URUGUAY WAS PREPARED TO ARREST AND EXTRADITE ARMANDO NICOLAI WHO WAS ENGAGED IN NARCOTICS ACTIVITY IN URUGUAY. THE ARREST NEVER WAS MADE. WHEN NEWS REACHED URUGUAY THAT NICOLAI HAD BEEN INDICTED IN NEW YORK ON DRUG CHARGES HE IMMEDIATELY DISAPPEARED AND HAS BEEN IN HIDING SINCE.

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4. U. S. OFFICIALS IN URUGUAY WERE UNDERSTANDABLY DIS-APPOINTED AND IRRITATED. THE PUBLICITY CONCERNING THE INDICTMENT OF NICOLAI WAS UNFORTUNATE BECAUSE IT NOT ONLY RESULTED IN THE ESCAPE OF A KNOWN DRUG TRAFFICKER BUT IT CAUGHT THE GOVERNMENT OF URUGUAY OFF GUARD. IF THERE HAD BEEN COORDINATION BETWEEN THE FEDERAL ATTORNEY' S OFFICE IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK WITH BNDD OR THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRIOR TO RELEASING NEWS OF THE INDICTMENT, NICOLAI WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN FOREWARNED AND WOULD NOW PROBABLY BE IN PRISON.

5. THE MILITARY HAS JUST RECENTLY TAKEN OVER CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT. HOPEFULLY, THE GOVERNMENT' S COMMITMENT TO DEAL WITH INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING WILL NOT BE A CASUALTY OF THE UPHEAVAL.

6. WHILE THIS COULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE ANTI-NARCOTICS STRUGGLE, U. S. OFFICIALS ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT THE COOPERATION THAT HAS STARTED IN URUGUAY WILL CONTINUE.
ROGERS

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